

***Persecution of Roma in the  
Independent State of Croatia 1941 -  
1945***

LINKAGE OF HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF ROMA IN EUROPE WITH THE PROMOTION OF TOLERANCE AND NON - DISCRIMINATION OF ROMA  
May 23 - 24 2013, Hotel Antunovic, Zagreb

# Short notes on the history of Roma in Croatia

## Roma migrations

- 1362: Dubrovnik (soldiers, domestic servants, musicians, blacksmiths, innkeepers, merchants)
- 1378: Zagreb (traders, butchers, furriers)
- smaller group (about 200 people), permanent inhabitants

## Roma: Ottoman-Croatian

- "pillaging raids": 1469 Lika and Krbava area; 1470 Senj
- Europe - Croatia:> 16th Century - legal persecution of Roma (Croatian Parliament)
- 1593 prescribed tax benefits Roma
- 1615 expulsion of Roma
- 1636 confirmation of the expulsion of Roma (King Ferdinand of Habsburg)

## Maria Theresa

- 1749 - 1767 expulsion of nomadic Roma, in 1758 compulsory settlement (permanent colonization), tax and other obligations to the state and local feudal lords; name "Gypsy" ("Zigani") replaced by "Neubauern" ("Novoseljaci" or "New farmers"), military training and guilds educations; 1767 removal of Roma children from their families and their accommodation in Christian civil and rural families, prohibition of Roma marriage, permanent colonization, military training and guilds education

## Joseph II

- 1783: prohibition of Roma settlements in forests, seizure of Roma children, restriction of Roma movement (forbidden vagrancy with mandatory possession of passport) and prohibition of certain Roma occupations (eg as entertainers)

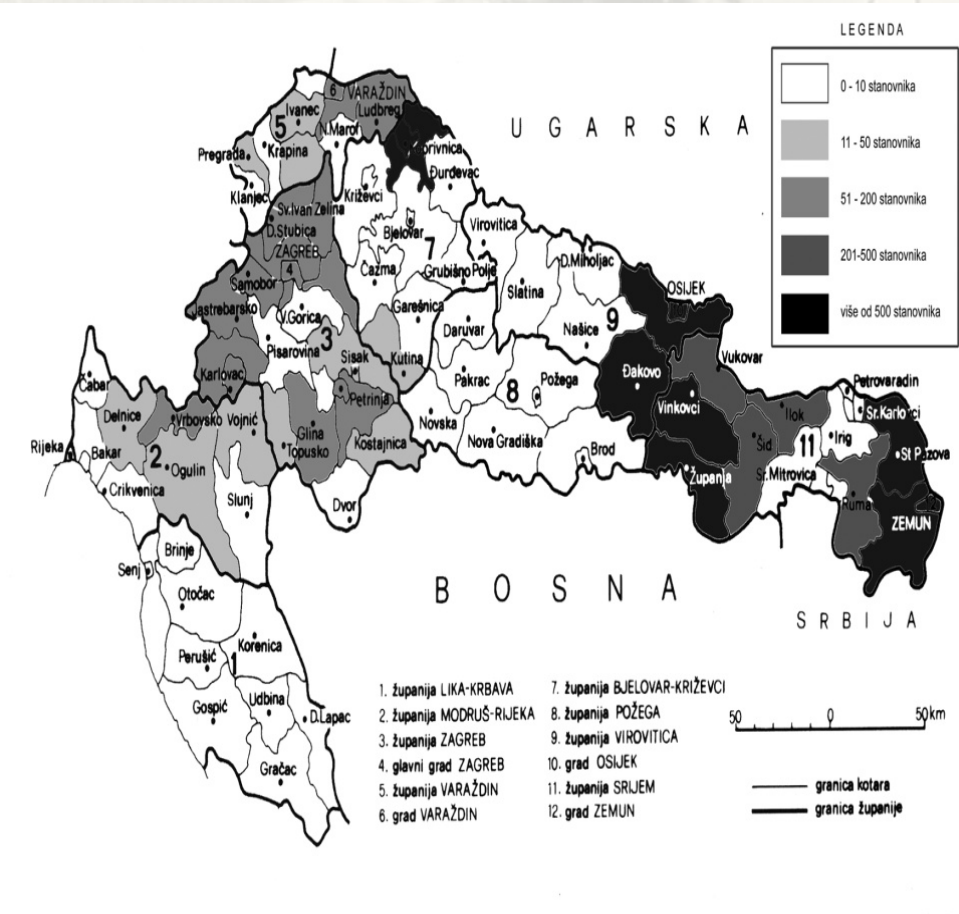
## Croatia

- 1738: legal provision of Ban Josip Esterházy of subjecting Roma ("Gypsies captain" tax benefits, state and local governments)
- 1781 - 1783: conscription of Roma in Srijemska, Krizevacka, Viroviticka and Pozeska County
- Nikola Škrlec Lomnički: *Projectum Legum motivatum* (1791), *Descriptio Physico - politicae situationis regni Hungariae* (1791)



- "Gypsy slavery" in Romanian countries - abolition in mid 19th Century - the migration of Roma to neighboring countries: settlement (Romanian) Roma in Croatia
- continuation of the legal regulation of the "Gypsy question": preventing Roma nomadic movement "Foreign"/"Black" Roma groups: the provisions of 1851, 1873, 1874, 1876, 1878 and 1882.

Roma population in Croatia and Slavonia, 1910.



Roma population in Croatia, 1880 - 1910

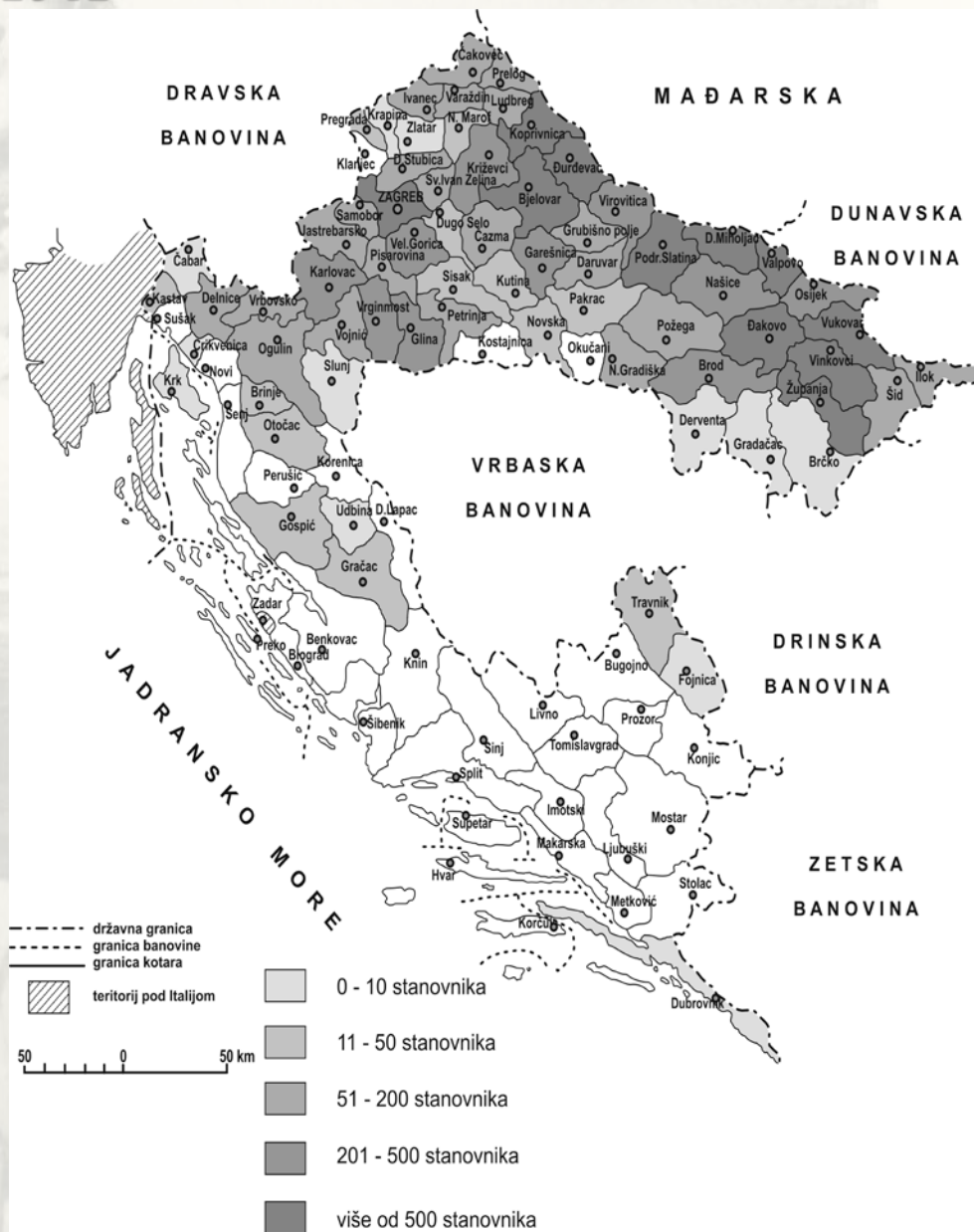
1880	1890	1900	1910
3482	4893	7207	12,267

Roma in Zagreb around mid-1920s



# Roma in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia/ Banate of Croatia, 1939 - 1941

Persecution of Roma in the Independent State of Croatia 1941 - 1945; May 23 - 24 2013, Zagreb



Kingdom of Yugoslavia	1931	
	Number of Roma	Percentage of Roma
Dravska	515	0.73 %
Hrvatska	14,879	21.18 %
Vrbaska	485	0.69 %
Drinska	3109	4.42 %
Zetska	6338	9.02 %
Dunavska	10,787	15.36 %
Moravska	8 919	12.7 %
Vardarska	24,494	34.87 %
Grad Beograd	699	0.99%
Kraljevina Jugoslavija	70,225	100%

Source: HDA, Zavod za statistiku 1875.-1948, sign. 367., kut. 55., sv. 70./ kut. 55, sv. 70.



## NDH - 1941: The beginnings of the persecution of Roma

Nazi - German authorities - The European "leader" in resolving the "Gypsy question"

German model of resolving the "Gypsy question":  
EUTHANASIA - DEPORTATION - THE FINAL SOLUTION

Racial legislation

April 30, 1941;

*Legal Decree on Racial Origins (Zakonska odredba o rasnoj pripadnosti)*

April 30, 1941;

*Legal Decree on the Protection of Aryan Blood and the Honour of the Croatian People  
(Zakonska odredba o zaštiti arijevske krvi i časti hrvatskog naroda)*

April 30, 1941;

*the Legal Decree on citizenship  
(Zakonska odredba o državljanstvu)*

April 17, 1941; *Legal Decree for the defense of the People and the State (Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i država)*

### *Legal Decree on Racial Origins*

§4. "...Like a Gypsy in terms of this Legal Decree applies to a person who originates from two or more ancestors of another generation, who are Gypsies by race..."

### *Legal Decree on the Protection of Aryan Blood and the Honour of the Croatian People*

§2. "...Special permission for marriage is required in the following cases: ... (...) ... 2. For married people, who have among their ancestors members of other non-European races with people of the same such origin or with a person who has one or two Jewish ancestors in the second generation by race or a single ancestor in the second generation Gypsy by race, or a person of Aryan origin..."

## Compulsory conscription of Roma

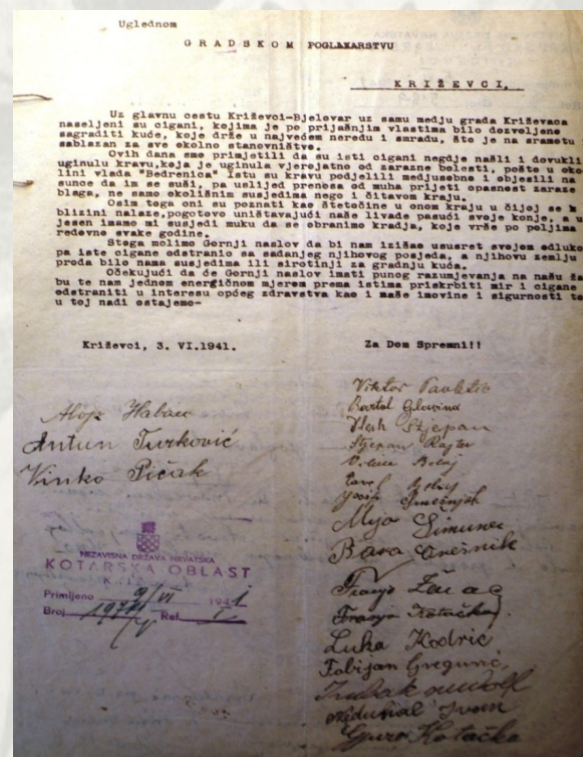
The Interior Ministry NDH (Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova NDH) -  
 - Instructions for composition statements on Race, July 3 1941: Personal information (date and place of birth, way of living, occupation)  
 Local authorities NDH (municipal and city authorities)  
 Police Directorate NDH (Redarstveno ravnateljstvo NDH)  
 Supervisors: Great County Prefect NDH - The Interior Ministry NDH (Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova NDH)

## Compulsory colonization of Roma Roma

- Initiative: City authorities of Krizevci - Government Institute for Colonization (Zavod za kolonizaciju) - Office for nationalized property (Ured za podržavljeni imetak)

A petition of City residents of Krizevci addressed to the Krizevci local authorities about the need persecution of Roma, June 3, 1941.

Source: HR HDA 246, Odjel za kolonizaciju V





# Rescuing of "White Gypsies"

## Resolution from Zenica

representatives of Muslim civil and religious authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina - the exclusion of Muslim Roma from racial persecution

White Gypsies as part of the Muslim population ("assimilated" and "Croatianized")

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the NDH - August 30, 1941, the decision to exclude Roma from conscription

May 1942 Ustasha authorities - deportation of Muslim Roma from Travnik - reactions of Muslims in Zenica - "Zenička Declaration" 26-5-1942

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the NDH, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1942 - suspended further deportations of Roma

"...Muslims so-called Gypsies are an integral part of the Muslim element in Herceg-Bosna. They are in no way different from other Muslims. They are born and die as Muslims, recorded in the same registers, they perform all the rituals of Islam, marry with other Muslim women and Muslims and are never considered as non-Muslims. They have always equally carried out religious and citizenship duties with other Muslims and enjoyed other rights as all Muslims at all times in the past and present. All Muslims without exception considered them now as always as being a part of their own and a joint body and they most vigorously and severely condemn singling them out and distinguishing these Muslims from other Muslims. All Muslims unanimously want and demand that these Muslims have the same position as all other Muslims in Herceg-Bosna..."

In Zenica, May 26th, 1942



# The persecution of the Roma in the NDH

## •"Execution" Roma:

•July 29th, 1941  
Ivanić Jarak  
(Karlovac area)

•January 1st, 1942  
Rakov Potok (74  
Roma from the  
village Desno  
Sredičko, Stipan  
and Lasinje;  
Karlovac area)

•January 1st, 1942  
near the village  
Skakavac (24 Roma  
from the village  
Pištac and Glavica;  
Karlovac area)

•January 6th, 1941  
in the forest  
Domaći Lug (41 Roma  
from the village  
Popovic)

## List of Roma killed in village Desno Sredičko, January 1,1942.

1. PARAPATIĆ Tome BARA, 1901, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku (jugozapadno od Zagreba prema Jastrebarskom).
2. PARAPATIĆ FRANCA, 1880, Ciganka, odvedena 21. 12.1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
3. PARAPATIĆ FRANCA, 1887, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
4. PARAPATIĆ FRANJO, 1885, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
5. PARAPATIĆ Franje FRANJO, 1916, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
6. PARAPATIĆ Tome FRANJO, 1935, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
7. PARAPATIĆ Tome IVAN, 1916, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
8. PARAPATIĆ Franje IVAN, 1936, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
9. PARAPATIĆ JANA, 1887, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
10. PARAPATIĆ JANA, 1918, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
11. PARAPATIĆ Tome JANA, 1923, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
12. PARAPATIĆ Tome JANKO, 1914, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
13. PARAPATIĆ Tome JELA, 1891, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
14. PARAPATIĆ JURA, 1881, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
15. PARAPATIĆ KATA, 1869, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
16. PARAPATIĆ KATA, 1912, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
17. PARAPATIĆ Franje KATICA, 1940, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
18. PARAPATIĆ MARA, 1883, Ciganka. Odvedena 21. 12. 1941. i ubijena od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
19. PARAPATIĆ TOMO, 1878, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
20. PARAPATIĆ TOMO, 1886, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.
21. PARAPATIĆ TOMO, 1910, Ciganin. Odveden 21. 12. 1941. i ubijen od ustaša 31. 12. 1941. u Rakov Potoku.



## Mass arrests and the deportation of Roma

- May 20, 1942 - end of July 1942: systematic persecution of the Roma in the NDH: the regulations of the Ministry of Interior of the NDH Ustasha Surveillance Service/ Ustaška nadzorna služba, Directorate for Public Order and Security NDH/, Ravnateljstva za javni red i sigurnost NDH, Supreme army command NDH/ Vrhovno oružničko zapovjedništvo NDH
- Background of persecution: the initiative and support of the Nazi authorities (Romania, Bulgaria); Ustasha authorities is more "important" issue of deportation of Serbian and Jewish population; unfinished construction of death camp Jasenovac
- presented to the public as a state attempt to "make them work" and "craft training"; Roma were told that they would "settle" on farms of displaced Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosovo, Bosnia, or their displacement in the central Croatian area, or moving there to the "gypsy country"
- Examples of arrest / deportation: Zagreb, May 28, 1942 - 69 Roma in Jasenovac, Zemun, beginning of June 1942, 400 Roma in Jasenovac; Županja, June 6, 1942, 2,000 Roma in Jasenovac; Vukovar (1136 adults and 469 children), Vinkovci (1154 Roma), Đakovo, Orahovica, Našice Podravska Slatina, Daruvar Virovitica, Grubišno Polje, Slavonska Požega, Slavonski Brod, Nova Gradiska, Novska
- Examples of attempts to "protect Roma": Pisarovina, Kutjevo, Vrpolje, Gunja.

"... On June 3, 1942 Ustasha arrested all the Gypsies with their family members in Podr. Slatina and they were taken to a concentration camp at Jasenovac. All these families were executed in various ways. The Ustasha Emigration Committee was the main initiator of this crime and they gave directives to Ustasha to carry out these crimes and after this to loot their property. I don't know about other perpetrators. Their property is all looted and carried away, also, by the Committee through its Ustasha... "

Source: Statement of Tine Kovčić about the deportation of Roma from Podravska Slatina to Jasenovac to the State Commission for the establishment of crime of the occupier and their accomplices, October 11 1945; HDA - ZKRZ - ZH, kut. 331, br. 22002 - 22012

## Roma in the Partizan movement

- Roma partisan unit; from spring to autumn 1943, village Bijela (Daruvar municipality)
- First Slavonian NOP Squad: November 1942 (3 - 6 Roma)

## Jasenovac Camp - Roma

- Roma weren't officially individually recorded, but with a number of a "railway wagons"
- Looting of property; frequent execution upon arrival
- villages Gradina (BiH) and village Uštica
- July 1942 Jasenovac is almost without Roma, except for a small number of "Gravediggers" (killed in early 1945)
- Other camps in the NDH and beyond
- 1944, Hungarian camp Komar, 2000 (?) Medimurje deported Roma

### *Roma victims*

- question of determining the exact number of victims of the Roma in the NDH (Jasenovac)
- Estimation: 7000 - 100 000 Roma casualties
- Narcisa Lengel - Krizman Roma 8570 (including about 3,000 unidentified persons); Milan Bulajić 40,000 Roma, Antun Miletic, 25,000 Roma, Ivo Goldstein 15,000 Roma; Manach Shell and Dennis Reinhartz 26,000 Roma
- problems: questionable demographic situation of the Roma population in NDH; the lack of Ustasha government documents; questionable number of Roma refugees from NDH in other areas (Italy)
- In the NDH, this was proportionally the greatest genocide on the Roma population during the Second World War (Deniss Reinhartz)



Thanks for your  
attention/ Hvala na  
pažnji!

Author:

Danijel  
Vojak,  
Institute of  
social  
science Ivo  
Pilar,  
Zagreb

May 24, 2013.

"... Cigani treba danas da iščeznu zajedno s posljednjim rubom crvenog kraljevskog plašta Slobode, koji još viri žalosno na izlazu pozornice. Stega, poslušnost, pokoravanje, određeno kretanje- to su suvremeni ideali. Zarobimo oblake, zauzdajmo sunce!...(…)…Gospodine, gospodine, kako ću bez vranca i bez šatora? Vodiske šil hilo. Me pe bušće dava ! (Srce zebe. Zaklat ću se!). - Šuti, Cigane, poklani su mnogi pjesnici i zaklali se brojni od njih, oteli im njihove Pegaze i oblačne šatore! Tko će te onda razumjeti?..."

"... Today Gypsies should vanish along with the last edge of the Red Royal Mantle of Freedom, which is still sadly peering at the stage exit. Discipline, obedience, submission, restriction of certain movement - these are modern ideals. Let's trap the clouds and curb the Sun!...(…)…Sir, sir, how will I manage without a Black Horse and a tent? Vodiske sil hilo. Me pe bušće dava! (Heart shivers. I will slay myself!). - Shut up, Gypsy, many poets were killed and a number of them killed themselves, they were robbed of their Pegasus and cloudy tents! Who will then understand you?..."

Source: Ivan Goran Kovačić, "Posljednji slobodnjaci", *Hrvatska revija*, 1939, vol. 12, n. 10, p. 543.